

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 12897 261022Z

14

ACTION EA-09

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

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O R 260940Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1861

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSJ YOKOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12897

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, JA

SUBJECT: LDP LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE

REF: TOKYO 12836

SUMMARY. SECOND LENGTHY ROUND OF MIKI-FUKUDA-OHIRA TALKS
BROKE OFF WITHOUT AGREEMENT. A MEDIATION EFFORT IS NOW
BEING MOUNTED BY CONSERVATIVE LEADERSHIP. KEY FIGURE
IN THAT MEDIATION EFFORT WAS PESSIMISTIC, HOWEVER, ABOUT
PROSPECTS DURING AN AUGUST 26 LUNCH WITH CHARGE. THIS
TENDS TO CONFIRM REPORTS BY INSIDERS, INCLUDING FUKUDA
HIMSELF, THAT IT MAY TAKE UNTIL EARLY SEPTEMBER TO
RESOLVE THE LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE, IF THAT IS POSSIBLE.
END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 12897 261022Z

1. SECOND MIKI-FUKUDA-OHIRA MEETING AUGUST 25 BROKE OFF

WITHOUT AGREEMENT. FUKUDA AND OHIRA ASKED THAT MIKI REFRAIN FROM DISSOLVING DIET (WITHOUT THEIR APPROVAL) AND STEP DOWN AS PRIME MINISTER BEFORE A GENERAL ELECTION. TO THIS, MIKI REPORTEDLY RESPONDED THAT HE COULD MAKE NO PROMISES THAT WOULD RESTRICT HIS DISSOLUTION AUTHORITY. IN STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CONVO-CATION OF AN EXTRAORDINARY DIET SESSION, HOWEVER, HE IMPLIED HE WOULD NOT DISSOLVE LOWER HOUSE AT OUTSET OF DIET SESSION. HE LATER RECONFIRMED THIS. ON TIMING OF HIS POSSIBLE RESIGNATION, HE SHOWED NO SIGN OF RETREAT FROM HIS EARLIER INSISTENCE THAT HE HIMSELF DISSOLVE LOWER HOUSE AND CALL A GENERAL ELECTION. UNABLE TO RESOLVE THESE TWO FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES, THREE MEN AGREED THAT FURTHER MEDIATION EFFORTS AMONG THEM BE CARRIED OUT BY FORMAL LDP LEADERSHIP.

2. OF PARTY LEADERSHIP, LDP EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAIRMAN NADAO IS KEY FIGURE. THIS IS BECAUSE OF HIS SENIORITY, INTEGRITY AND TRUSTED RELATIONSHIP WITH THREE PRINCIPALS INVOLVED.

3. NADAO TOLD CHARGE OVER LUNCH AUGUST 26 THAT TASK OF MEDIATION WAS EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT AND PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE. HE MADE IT UNMISTAKEABLY CLEAR THAT HE FAVORED MIKI'S EARLY RESIGNATION, BUT HE WAS NOT AT ALL SANGUINE THAT MIKI WOULD BE WILLING TO STEP DOWN GRACEFULLY. HE STRESSED NECESSITY OF AN EARLY SETTLEMENT OF PARTY DIFFERENCES TO PERMIT PASSAGE OF URGENTLY NEEDED FINANCIAL LEGISLATION AND THUS FOR THE SAKE OF LDP AND NATION HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO FIND AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. HE DECLINED TO COMMENT, HOWEVER, ON POSSIBLE OUTLINE OR TIMING OF SUCH A SOLUTION. (AMONG POSSIBILITIES BEING BANDIED ABOUT IS REVIVED SUGGESTION OF A CARETAKER PM, ONE OF LESS AMBITIOUS PARTY ELDERS, TO SEE LDP THROUGH ELECTIONS, BUT NADAO, ONE OF CANDIDATES, SAID THIS WAS PREMATURE.)

4. ALTHOUGH SOME SIGNS OF DISARRAY IN RANKS OF ANTI-MIKI FORCES HAVE APPEARED, THEIR EFFORTS HAVE NOT CEASED. THE LOOSE ALLIANCE WHICH PLANNED ANTI-MIKI CAUCUS HAS REORGANIZED UNDER LEADERSHIP OF LDP ELDER SHIGERU HORI. HORI HAS THUS FAR URGED IMMEDIATE MIKI RESIGNATION ON LDP LEADERSHIP AND, IN SEPARATE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 12897 261022Z

MEETING, ON NADAO PERSONALLY. DESPITE THIS, HOWEVER, FUKUDA HIMSELF IS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT IT MAY TAKE UNTIL EARLY SEPTEMBER TO RESOLVE PRESENT STANDOFF. THIS IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CONFIRMED IN ALL OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH INSIDERS DURING PAST FEW DAYS. IT WAS ALSO REFLECTED, IF LESS DIRECTLY, IN NADAO'S PESSIMISTIC LUNCHEON PROGNOSIS. SHOESMITH

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